DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 058 368 UD 012 050

AUTHOR Bonilla, Eduardo Seda
TITLE Two Patterns of Race Relations.
PUB DATE [69]
NOTE 52p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS American Culture; Bias; Cultural Factors; Cultural Images; Culture Conflict; *Identification (Psychological); *Latin American Culture; Negro Stereotypes; *Puerto Ricans; *Race Relations; Racial Attitudes; Racial Discrimination; *Racial Recognition; Racial Segregation; Social Discrimination

ABSTRACT

What North Americans term "race" is not structurally isomorphic to and, thus, not synonymous with what Latin Americans apply the term to. The social identities determined by "race", and consequently the expected behavior ascribed to these identities, are so dissimilar that meetings between persons of both cultures produce uncertainty and discord. In both the United States and Latin America, the racial phenomenon emerges from cultural assumptions which attribute function as identity credentials for the social structure, and what expectations are ascribed to such identities. Given the fact that what are dealt with are cultures based on such unlike assumptions, it is difficult to understand why the elementary principle of cultural relativism is ignored, only to fall into rampant ethonocentrism. Particular attention is given to the case of Puerto Rico. Although the North American image of the Puerto Rican is of a human unaware of racism and accepting of a non-white identity, the reality is quite different. The social and political implications of racial characteristics in Puerto Rico became accentuated through the Puerto Rican's misunderstanding of what to a North American constitutes membership in a racial category other than white. [Due to the quality of the original, several pages of this document will not be clearly legible when reproduced.] (Author/JM)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED058368

TWO PATTERNS OF RACE RELATIONS

Dr. Eduardo Seda Bonilla

Abstract

In this paper we will attempt to demonstrate that what North Americans call "race" is not structurally isomorphic to, and thus not synonymous with what we Latin Americans apply the term to. The social identities determined by "race" and consequently the expected behavior ascribed to these identities, are so dissimilar in the two cultures that meetings between persons of both cultures produce uncertainty, friction, and discord.

In both the United States and Latin America, the racial phenomenon emerges from cultural assumptions which designate which attributes function as identity credentials for the social structure, and what expectations are ascribed to such identities. Given the fact that we are dealing with cultures based on such unlike assumptions, we cannot understand why the elementary principle of cultural relativism is ignored, only to fall into rampant ethnocentrism. Perhaps the answer is in the confidence that North Americans have in their power to "define" us.

The categories from which North Americans build their perception of the racial phenomenon are those which they have internalized as "something natural" in their culture. In North American culture, if a person "has" in his ancestry a non-white member, the mythical "drop of blood" that he has supposedly inherited from this ancestor constitutes the determining element of his "non-white" racial identity. According to this criterion, "one drop of Negro Blood", that is, any degree of mixture with the Negro population, is sufficient to consider a person a Negro, placing no importance on his physical appearance. The logical consequence of this mode of conceptualizing is that there are only two racial categories; "white" and"non-white". A person is white if he can claim "pure" descent, with no mixing. If he cannot ~~claim such~~ "pure" descent, then he is a "non-white",

UD 012050

BEST AVAILABLE COPY 1

and it matters not that his physical traits may be the type that we Latin Americans have learned to identify as unquestioned credentials of white identity, for example: blue eyes, blond hair, light skin, "delicate" nose and lips, etc.[1] In films such as "Pinky", "The View from Pompey's Head", a "black" person assumes a white identity. In books such as Black Like Me, the white protagonist passes for a Negro and is accepted as such because somatic traits are acriterial in the United States social structure.

St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton[2] have commented on the acriteriality of somatic traits in the United States. They describe cases of persons with a racial identity who assume the identity of the other side of the line to the utter confusion of everyone.

> Although persons particularly sensitized to racial differences may be a bit more astute in identifying racial characteristics, a point is reached where it is impossible, with even the most refined anthropological measurement to distinguish Negroes from whites. Mixed parties have been held in the Negro community where white girls have passed for Negro and Negro girls for white to the utter confusion of guests.

The a-criteriality of somatic traits for racial identification of persons within the North American social structure has received comment by the anthropologist LLoyd Warner:[3]

> If the word 'race' were to have any meaning at all when applied to Negroes, it should indicate that Negroes produce Negro offspring when mated with their own kind. But some of the Negroes of Old City could not produce a racial Negro no matter how often and hard they might try. This is true for the very good reason, that by all physical tests an anthropologist might apply, some social Negroes are biologically white and, when mated with their own kind, can produce only white children.

Racial categories are socially defined, socially inculcated, and socially reinforced and maintained by consensus and power. Their function is to limit the number of persons who have access to social wellbeing: that is, to power, prestige or property.

The social criterion of what constitutes "race" for North America has been termed "hypodescent" by Dr. Marvin Harris.[4] He describes the North American social myth thus:

> The rule of hypodescent is therefore an invention which we in the United States have made in order to keep biological facts from intruding into our collective racist fantasies. With it we have gone so far as to create Alice in Wonderland kind of Negroes about whom people say, "he certainly does not look like a Negro." Consider the case of Harry S. Murphy, the young man who recently announced that he, rather than James Meredith had been the first Negro ever to be admitted to the University of Mississippi.

From the North American point of view, physical appearance does not constitute an index, for a person can have unquestionable somatic characteristics of the white population, and be considered Negro, on the social grounds of hypodescent as a criterion of racial identity. With this same perspective, those sectors of the population which are the result of racial crosses are classified, by hypodescent, in the "non-white" category.

In contrast, based on the somatic indexes which are the determining criteria employed in the social structure of Latin American cultures, the children of marriages of negros, Indians, and whites produce physical crosses with recognized intermediate social identity. Since only identical twins are somatically and genetically identical, there must be selection among the multitude of somatic differences available for classifications. Selection is based on such traits as texture of hair, shape of nose,

skin shade etc.

It is in this way that in the Latin American social structure, a multiplicity of categories emerge between white and black, and between white and Indian. With reference to Brazil, Harry Hutchinson[5] has managed to find nineteen racial categories:

caboclo
preto
preto retinto
preto de qualidad
cabra (cabrocha)
cabo verde
escuro
mestizo
mulato
mulato claro
pardo
sarara
branco de terra
moreno
moreno de cabelo ruin
moreno de cabelo fino
moreno branco
branco
albo, louro etc.

From an American frame of reference, this fine categorizing based on somatic types seems almost obsessive. Hutchinson relates to that feeling in the following words:

> A distinction between Negro and White is always kept in mind. When classifying an individual everyone knows who is "pure" and who is not. Bahianos of the Reconcavo feel that one may instantly recognize the difference between a "pure" white and a mixed white, Indian-white, Negro-white, Negro-Indian, but they do not let it go at that. They classify and minutely describe each person: they classify to skin, colour, facial features and their classifications of racial types are used in every day conversation.[6]

Stokes mentions the following categories, or "castas" in colonial Mexico:

Spaniard with Indian
mestizo with Spaniard
castiza with Spaniard
Spaniard with Negro
Spaniard with mulatto
Spaniard with morisca
Spaniard with albina
Indian with tornatras
lobo with Indian
sambayo with Indian
mestizo
castiza
Spaniard
mulatto
morisca
albina
tornatras
lobo
sambayo
cambujo

cambujo with mulatto	alvarazado
alvarazado with coyota	barzina
barzina with mulatto	coyote
coyote with Indian	chamizo
chamizo with mestizo	coyote mestizo
coyote mestizo with mulatto	there you are

Maria Teresa Babin quotes from the classification used in the Puerto Rican social structure in the past centuries, which is very similar to the Mexican system of"castas":[7]

Spaniard with Indian	mestizo
mestizo with Spaniard	castizo
castizo with Spaniard	Spaniard
Spaniard with negra	mulatto
mulato with Spaniard	morisco
morisco with Spaniard	salta atras
salta atras with Indian	chino
chino with mulatto	lobo
lobo with mulatto	jibaro
jibaro with Indian	albarazado
albarazado with negra	cambujo
cambujo with Indian	sambaigo
sambaigo with mulatto	calpan-mulatto
calpan-mulatto with sambaigo	tente en el aire
tente en el aire with mulatto	no te entiendo
no te entiendo with Indian	there you are ....

With respect to Haiti and Guadeloupe, Moreau de Saint-Mery has identified the following racial categories:[8]

blanc with negre	mulatre
blanc with mulatre	quarteron
blanc with quarteron	metisse
blanc with metisse	mamelouque
blanc with mamelouque	sang mele
blanc with sang mele	marabout
blanc with marabout	quarteron
negre with mulatre	griffe
blanc with griffone	quarteron
blanc with sacatra	quarteron
negre with sang mele	mulatre
negre with quarteron	mulatre
negre with mamelouque	mulatre
negre with metisse	mulatre
negre with marabou	griffe
negre with grifonne	sacatra
negre with sacatra	sacatra

Judging from Andean literature, racial nomenclature is as varied there as in the rest of Latin America: indio, mestizo, blanco, runa, rosca, chagra, longo, pongo, zambo, and cholo are terms generally used in the literature.

A second consequence of the application of somatic criteria is observable in the foregoing classifications: that is, a person can have the non-white "drop of blood" in his lineage, but if his somatic traits coincide with specifications of the norm*, his identity will be white. In the aforementioned classifications, the children of a castizo father and a Spanish mother were considered Spanish. In Brazil, persons with negro ancestry who have crossed the color line are known as "brancos de terra": in Haiti they are called "petit blanc": in Puerto Rico, the term "white, with a trace" (blanco con raja) describes the same phenomenon.

This contrast between Latin American and North American cultures apparently produces cryptomelanic horror among North Americans who have studied the social structure underlying racial relations in Latin America. They withdraw into an explanation which is ethnocentric and definitely contaminated by racism, Americano style. They assume that racial categories in the United States are "genotypical" in comparison with Latin American categories, which they consider "social", or otherwise "phenotypical". In this way, they imply that:

---

* This varies from one country or region to another. In the Andean region, language and clothes denote identity credentials. Regional identity for example is portrayed by the hat: Indian, Cholo, and white often represent ethnic or cultural cleavages with socially assumed correlation with racial categories.

a) hypodescent is a biological, not a social criterion (an ethnocentric, racist fallacy).

b) hypodescent is actually observed to the letter in order to maintain the purity of the white race category (a racist fallacy, since a considerable portion of the white population, or their ancestors, have "passed"). See Robert Stuckert, "The African Ancestry of White Americans" in Peter Hammonds, 1964, where it is estimated that 23% of the American white population has Negro ancestry.

c) Latin American racial identities are phenotypical (genetically impure), while the U. S. ones are genotypical (therefore genetically pure), a social hypocricy that ignores interbreeding and passing and pretends to reinstate the myth or pure races.

d) Racial categories in Latin America are biological fiction, Latin Americans are really mestizos, that is, "non-whites": prejudice of a "non-white" against other "non-whites" is not "racial" but rather "social", (implying that racial prejudice is an inborn biological repulsion).

To analyze the social structure underlying racial relations in Latin America, North American sociologists and anthropologists tend to impose on us their cultural looking-glass, based on their social criterion of hypodescent in the guise of science, and thus they conclude that in Latin America no "true" racial prejudice exists, that is North American style prejudice. Yet the fact is that if Latin America's racial categories are social, U. S. categories are as well.

In examining sociological literature on race relations in Latin America, one is immediately confronted with the repeated assumption that the problem does not exist in this privileged region of the world. Thus we run across authors such as Beate Saltz[9] who, with better intentions than critical sense, tells us that:

> Theoretically, an Indian may be defined in terms of race and thus identified on the basis of biological criteria. This pattern of identification is in line with popular and scientific usage in the United States, especially in regard to the Negro. But it does not obtain in Indo-American countries, which have never practiced discrimination and segregation on the grounds of color. Furthermore, North American observers and South American scholars and administrators agree that the racial criterion for the identification of the Indian is, for the purpose of social analysis and policy, both unrealistic and undesirable. That criterion would tend to inject into the Indian question a racialist bias which is foreign to South American tradition.

When we consider carefully the shameful living conditions of Latin America's negros, mulattoes and indigenous groups, these writers tell us that it is not out of racial prejudice that they are thus degraded, but rather because of social prejudice. Are these writers implying that there are attitudes of scorn to support exploitation and colonization of one's fellow men which are inborn and not learned?

But of course our common sense goes, there are differences between Mongoloids, Negroids and Caucasoids. What is not said is that only between identical twins are there no genetically determined differences, and for the mongoloid class, or any other class with a racial status attached to it, there is an a priori selective process based upon an assumed criteria of differentiation. What is not said is that there are no criteria of racial differentiation which stand the test of validity or realiability. (Valid traits are genetically determined ones.) For example, blood types are found in all the populations of the world and therefore have no realiability as criteria of classification. The attempt made to use frequency distributions of these traits

reifies a concept and forces it into the data with the hope of saving it. Racism creeps from the most unexpected places - - with socially supported assumptions spreading their derogatory self-fulfilling ex-post facto "prophecies" over colonially exploited populations. What is not said is that once given social validation "racial differences", whatever they may be - - say religion as with Jews, nationality as with Chicanos and Puerto Ricans, hypodescent as with Blacks - - they really make the difference - - and that is not a laughing matter. Once this procrustean bed is set up you don't need evidence of what is a validly significant criteria of racial identity - - social deprivation, social hypocrisy to disguise exploitation will take its own course.

All studies indicate that prejudices are not innate, and if they exist it is because they have been inculcate.[12] Neither the categories nor "racial" hatred are innate, as cruel as may have been let us say, the hatred of the so-called "Aryans" for members of the supposed Jewish race of Nazi Germany.

In this respect, Brewton Berry has written:

> Properly speaking, races are zoological categories and we do not have social relations between zoological categories. We do indeed have relations between people distinguished by marks of racial descent - - by people who have been made conscious of such marks thereby affecting their conceptions of themselves and their status in "society".

A professor of political science at Northwestern University, George Blankstein,[13] illustrates in a recent publication the North American point of view:

> The point cannot be overemphasized that these terms "white", mestizo, cholo, Indian, refer to groups defined in fundamentally social and cultural, rather than biological ways, despite the frequent loose use of the word "race".

In History of Latin America, Hubert Herring describes - - so he says with discretion - - the phenomenon of the supposed lack of biological validity for the racial categories of Latin America:

> How much African blood flows in the veins of Mexicans, Peruvians, Brazilians, Cubans? The search for an answer is difficult. No Latin American census has applied the criterion of race with the (sic) rigor of the United States tabulators, and the figures reveal little as to racial divisions. There has been much conjecture as to how many Latin Americans are to be classified as Negroes, but it can be little more than guess work. Added to other difficulties there is the perplexing question as to what percent of Negro - - one drop, one half, or just how much criteria differ north and south. But "if we are fit to say that one drop of Negro blood makes you a Negro", writes Rayford W. Logan, and they, the Latin Americans, say that one drop of White blood makes you white we should maintain a discreet silence.

John Gillin speaks of "mestizo America", where:

> The number of racially pure whites without any admixture of Indian or other colored factors is certainly very small throughout the area, and except in a few restricted circles and families, the possession of pure White ancestry is not regarded as socially significant. For practical purposes, therefore, we may consider the racial composition as divided between Indians, Mestizos, and Negroids.

Can it be that these gentlemen do not know that the term "pure white" represents no entity nor quality, except in the megalomaniacal fantasy of Hitler and his followers? Ralph Linton[16] has written:

> It seems slightly ludicrous that the main exponents of the theory of superiority of pure strains should be inhabitants of Europe, one of the most thoroughly hybridized regions in the world. It is improbable that there is a single European alive today who does not have at least one hybrid among his ancestors while most Europeans are a result of a long series of crossings. The Huns, a yellow tribe from far Eastern Asia, raided almost to the Atlantic and after their defeat dissolved into the European population. Other Asiatic tribes such as the Avars and Magyars settled areas in Eastern Europe interbreeding until they disappeared as a distinct physical type. The Romans brought in Negro slaves while in later times the Mohammedan conquerors of Spain and Sicily had more than a tinge of black blood. Lastly, there have been several varieties of whites in Europe since before the close of the old stone age.

To convince oneself that the concept of pure race is fallacious, one need only read the exhaustive studies of anthropological evidence presented before UNESCO by the noted physical anthropologist, Harry Shapiro[17] concerning the promiscuousness with which different racial groups intermixed in the initial stages of Near Eastern civilization. It is precisely because of the universality of racial mixture that physical anthropology has begun to discard the concept of human races as inapplicable and harmful. The concept is valid for other species, but not for the human species. Ashley Montagu,[18] referring to the lack of biological evidence for race, has stated, with reference to the whole world:

> All but a very few individuals take it completely for granted that scientists have established the "facts" about race .... scientists do little to discourage this view .... as Huyben has remarked, geneticists believe that anthropologists have decided what a race is. Ethnologists assume that their classifications embody principles which genetic science have proved correct .... Actually none of them have any grounds, but those which spring from this prejudice for such beliefs.

Frank B. Livingstone[19], has argued in a paper, "On the Non-Existence of Human Races", that, "There are excellent arguments for abandoning the concept of race with reference to the living populations of Homo Sapiens."

The question of how much African blood flows in the veins of the Latin American peoples, as Hubert Herring asks metaphorically and, so he says, "with discretion", has been categorically answered with respect to the North American populace. In his article, "The African Ancestry of White Americans", Robert P. Stuckert[20] argues that 23% of persons classified in the United States as "white" had Negro ancestors in their biological inheritance. John Burma[21] estimates that some 2,500 colored North Americans cross the racial boundary annually to change to white. In other words, the fact that racial mixing is not recognized socially does not mean that it does not occur.

In spite of North Americans' culturally-acquired assumption that they are 100% white, such an assumption is nothing else than megalomanic phantasy which attempts to displace the personal and collective frustrations onto a scapegoat which "redeems" them and takes over their sense of failure and stigma. This racistic escape from "reality" has secondary reinforcements in the profits that accrue from low wages or no wages at all, from exploitative rent charged for filthy habitation, for impunity of offensive behavior, for unrestrained exercise of power, domination and exploitation.

There is no innate antipathy, nor is there an innate consciousness of difference among persons classified by society as

racially different. All studies indicate that it is necessary to teach children to think in racial terms and to hate. Neither hatred nor its projection to race categories is innate. All evidence shows that when persons of different racial categories find themselves in contact with one another, they tend to mix. There is no pre-determined biological repulsion among groups. If repulsion exists, we must look for its origin in social structure. We have said that within the frame of reference of North America's culture, somatic traits do not constitute a criteria, since a person could have all the traits that we in Latin America learn to associate with the white identity and be considered a Negro, on the basis of hypodescent. In the literature, this problem is presented in terms of the plot within which a character who has physical traits of the white North European population but who has lived his life as a Negro, by some chance "passes" the invisible line that separates the black caste from the white caste. He then fears being caught in what that society considers a horrible fraud and is forced to return to his Negro identity. The dramatism of works such as The View From Pompey's Head, Lost Boundaries, "Pinky", "Imitation of Life", etc., are unintelligible in Latin America due to the fact that there the problem of the protagonist's racial identity is not self-evident. Passing* is senseless there because somatic criteria prevail.

---

* The closest thing to "passing" takes place when a person attempts a change in racial identity by altering the appearance of his nose through plastic surgery and straightening his hair to meet white standards, or conceals the shape or color of his hair by coloring, turbans, or bleaching.

Thus the drama is experienced in terms of the protagonist's renouncement of family and friends.[22] Yet the strain for imitation of American "drama" is such in Latin America that of late a number of literary works have appeared in which a somatically white person renegades a somatically black, surrogate mother type of nanny. The sentimentality of the drama still remains in the breaking of the "sacred" bond with the mamacita re: "El Derecho de Nacer".

Another consequence of the Latin American type of racial conceptualization is that even though the social distance between groups in the polar positions (e.g. between blacks and whites) is considerable, the social distance between contiguous categories is not so sharply defined. If we measure the social distance between grifos and mulattoes, between negros and grifos, between whites and whites with a "trace", we will find that it is plainly less than between polar categories, that is, between blacks and whites. As a consequence, of "tolerance" among contiguous categories, there is a marked tendency toward intermixing between persons belonging to contiguous categories. Given the existence of racial prejudice, hypergamic pressure tends to push in the direction of "bleaching". T. Lynn Smith has observed this process of "mobility" toward the "less-colored" categories of the population, and has called it "bleaching".*[23]

Dr. Hoeting argues that the bleaching process is peculiar

---

* The term "whiter" or "less-colored" would have no meaning in North American culture.

to Ibero-America, due to the "somatic similarity" of the mulatto and the presumed "non-western European" (sic) living in the Iberian peninsula:

> The continued absorption of light mulattoes produces a relative increase of the number of white (and a gradual decrease of "pure" Negroes). These processes account for a "whitening out" of the population (though the whites do become darker in time). The Iberian somatic norm is "darker" than the West European, the somatic distance between the Iberian somatic norm image and the light mulatto is smaller than that between West European and the light mulatto.

According to I. Da Costa Pinto[24] and T. Lynn Smith[25], the racial composition of Brazil has been bleaching in such a way that the white composition has increased from 38.11% in 1872 to 61.7% in 1950.

Table #1
Distribution of racial groups in Brazil

	1877	1890	1940	1950
White	38.11	43.91	63.53	61.7
Intermediate	42.11	41.40	21.33	27.1
Negro	19.74	14.63	14.65	11.0

The situation for Venezuela follows the exact same pattern as shown by the following data assembled by Angel Rosenblat:

Table #2a
Distribution of Racial groups in Venezuela

Population groups	17th Cent.	18th Cent.	19th Cent.
White	.6	8.1	20
Pardos	1.6	8.1	45.3
Negros	1.6	8.1	16.7
Indians	96.1	75.6	17.8
Total	312,000	370,000	897,000

In Argentina, the bleaching process has been combined with a racist immigration policy, which has provided incentives to a

large number of persons of European origin, while imposing restrictions on other groups. At the present time, Argentine racism is expressed by categorically denying the existence of its indigenous population which actually lives in impoverished, exploited conditions. American sociology has disseminated the myth that Argentina is not Latin America because it is white, and the Argentines have adopted this as a screen. Today Argentina is a country in which the Negro population has completely bleached into the white category while the indigenous population has been absorbed to a certain degree although there are still groups which remain rooted in indigenous tradition.

Nevertheless, according to Ralph Beals,[26] the racial composition of Argentina in the last century shows a very pronounced process of bleaching.

Table #3
Racial Composition of Argentina

	1700	1800	1852	1869
Whites	.50	1.25	2.71	19.40
Mestizos	8.33	58.47	69.50	72.93
Indians	88.33	29.16	12.34	.16
Negros	1.16	2.77	1.85	.83
Mulattoes	1.66	8.31	13.58	6.65
Totals	600,000	720,000	810,000	1,803,000

With respect to the racial composition of Puerto Rico, Juan Rodriguez Cruz[27] offers the following statistics on the bleaching that has taken place since 1763:

Table #4

Year	Negro	White
1763	12.50	82.50
1794	33.00	66.00
1802	53.40	46.07
1812	52.03	47.07
1820	54.70	42.30
1827	50.30	49.70
1830	49.80	50.20
1834	47.37	52.63
1846	51.24	48.76
1860	48.48	51.52
1899	40.00	60.00
1910	34.50	65.50
1920	27.00	73.00
1930	25.70	74.30
1940	23.45	76.55
1950	23.00	77.00

Data which generally passes unnoticed by sociologists when they assume that white North Americans are 100% white suggest that bleaching appears to be as pronounced in some states of the Union as it is in Latin America. If we take the indices used by Dr. Tomas Blanco we will notice that the frequency with which people change racial identity in Puerto Rico is not fundamentally different from the same process in several states of the United States.[28]

Table #5*

Non-white Population

	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960
Mississippi	56.2	52.2	50.2	49.3	45.4	42.3
South Carolina	55.2	51.4	45.6	42.9	38.9	34.3
Georgia	45.1	41.7	36.8	34.7	30.9	28.6
Alabama	42.5	38.4	35.7	34.7	32.1	30.1
Louisiana	43.1	38.9	36.9	36.0	33.0	32.1
Puerto Rico	34.5	27.0	25.7	23.4	20.3	----
Virginia	32.6	29.9	26.8	24.7	22.2	20.8

* Data since 1940 has been supplemented from U. S. census reports.

Another difference between U. S. and Latin American social structures resides in the fact that North Americans take as a socially significant factor the nationality of one's ancestors. Thus, people are distinguished as "Italians", "Irish", "French", "Scottish", "Mexicans", "Yankees", "Polish", etc. Latin American cultures do not practice such discrimination, so that a person whose last name is O'Neill, Bruckman, Santini, Wiscovitch, or Ramirez, is simply a Puerto Rican if he was born in Puerto Rico. In the United States, these persons would be "Irish", "German", "Corsicans", "Slavic", "Spaniards", etc., always of course provided that no Negro or Mongoloid "drop of blood" were to invalidate that social identity. The omission of these credentials of European origin in Puerto Rican culture is another of the indices that North Americans take as evidence that no one, or very few, have the right to claim for themselves a white social identity in Puerto Rico.* Dr. Glanco states the issue in harsh terms:

> But in the same way that our people will never understand completely the depth of racial prejudice in the United States, the ordinary or non-reflecting North American cannot - - or does not wish - - to arrive at an understanding of the degree of civilized racial coexistence that we enjoy: and he tries in the most facile and simplistic way, explanations for the phenomenon. In general, the explanation consists in declaring that all of us (or almost all) are Negro. It has even reached the point of veiled insinuations that

---

* Even a liberal writer like Thomas Mathews in a recent article falls into this fallacious calculation of how many "pure" white Puerto Ricans exist. "La Condicion de Color en Puerto Rico", mimeo.

> there is reason to doubt the purity of the criollos born of a peninsular mother and father, because being procreated in Puerto Rico does not guarantee positive Spanish paternity. To such strange laboriously-thought out absurdities can racial prejudice extend, the incomprehension of the foreigner, and human stupidity combined.[29]

Confronted with facts that indicate a tacit acceptance of "bleaching"* in Latin America, and the fact that intermediate graduations between Negro, Indian and White are recognized, and categorically awarded independent social status, North Americans conclude that no racial prejudice exists in Latin America. They interpret the visible aspects of the phenomenon as being one of social character: i.e. prejudice of a non-white person against another non-white is not racial prejudice but social, implying that racial prejudice is non-social and therefore biological. Then they sort of dismiss a real exploitative situation by labeling it social in character - - a sort of caprice with no "real significance". Underlying racistic and ethnocentric cognitive assumptions determine such perception. What else could a prejudice be except a component of social structure? Would it be an innate repulsion? Or would it be something learned?

The theorem of W. I. Thomas states that what people assume to be true in social structure tends to become true in its

---

* In a play by Francisco Arrivi about the identity problem raised by the introduction of the criteria of hypodescent into our culture, the central character of the play laments in these words: "Can there be a worse fate for a black person than having to live with his white grandchildren." Cf: Los Vegiantes

consequences through the operation that Merton called "self-fulfilling prophecy". The "truth" which these racists beliefs impose on the lives of millions of human beings, both in the United States and Latin America, constitutes an insult to humanity. If the negro in Brazil, as Gilberto Freyre has said,[30] is closer to heaven than in other regions, then in truth we live in a world of plunder, of hatred and unqualified exploitation.

Let us look at some rather eloquent data on racial prejudice in Brazil, collected by Professor Costa Finto[31] in O Negro no Rio de Janeiro. The mortality rate of Brazilian negros was two times higher than among whites. The rate among mestizos was even higher, according to this author. The study states that 95.75% of the entrepreneurs were white, while the proportion of negros was 4.25%. Of the population of Rio de Janeiro, 29% has been classified as belonging to the Negro race. 7% of the city's population lives in favelhas (slums). 71% of favelha dwellers belong to the category of negro.

Along this same line, Arthur Ramos[32] has described the horrors of negro slavery in Brazil, the massacres committed by whites in quilombos such as those in Palmares.

Recent studies of Emilio Willems[33] state that there are help-wanted ads in Brazilian newspapers which specifically exclude persons "of color". The expression "due to appearance", which is used to deny employment to negros and mulattoes in Brazil, has turned into a nightmare for those affected by this type of racial discrimination, according to Willems. De facto segregation

exists in Sao Paulo according to Willems report. He mentions the use of segregationist practices in barbershops and other public places in Brazil. Exclusion is sometimes not even necessary, since those affected by this situation avoid segregated places, "for fear of being rejected".

The president of a social club informed Willems that they do not look kindly on "colored" persons in dances, because parents would take this as an offense both to their dignity and to the club's prestige. So much for the much-heralded "racial democracy" of Brazil.

Ø. Nogueira,[34] a student of the Brazilian racial phenomenon, describes the distortion introduced by the North American sociologist in the study of race relations in Brazil:

> Generally speaking if one should examine the existing literature on the Brazilian race situation produced by scholars or by Brazilian or North American observers, one would notice that the Brazilian writers ... have a tendency to deny or underestimate the prejudice that exists in Brazil, while North Americans have difficulty in observing it in the way it exists in Brazil.

Octavio Janni,[35] in his book Racas e Classes Sociais no Brazil expresses an equally critical point of view when he argues that prevailing myths of a society are always those which harmonize with the maintaining of the existing power structure, and that studies of racial relations in Brazil are plagued by myths such as the one of racial democracy, the one of the idealized Indian, etc.*

---

* Recent news reports inform of mass murders committed by Brazilian troops of indigenous populations. In a recent meeting in Mexico, Father Francisco Lago Pesoa of Brazil began to talk of how his grandfather had hunted Indians like wild animals in northern Brazil. One of Mexico's great anthropologists, Gonzalo Aguirre Beltran, commented that the practice of hunting Indians was also common in northern Mexico.

A study carried out by Paulo de Carvalho Neto[36] in Uruguay provides information very similar to that described for Brazil's case. In Argentina little has been written on the problem, since they have held on to the escape from reality given them by North Americans who have classified them as 100% white. The verbal extermination of Argentina's "non-white" population coincides with genocidal practices described by Father Gusinde[37] in Patagonia and by contemporary authors such as David Vinas.[38]

Jose Maria Borrero[39a] has described in La Patagonia Tragica the inhuman atrocities to the Tehuelche Indians by estancieros and their henchmen during the 1920s. He collected photographic evidence in which bands of armed men hunted the Indians like wild animals. The price paid by estancieros for the life of each as proven by pairs of ears was one pound. When they noticed Indians who had survived the cutting of their ears, more vital organs (head, testicles, breasts) were required as proof. He describes how a captured whale was poisoned in order to massacre the hunting and gathering Onas who partook of the meat. That the world has never raised its voice of protest against these atrocities is a clear reminder of the perversion of morality in international politics. Today Indians in Argentina are called "Opas" in a derisive disregard for their capacity to fight back or to argue their case.

In the Andean countries, the picture which emerges from works such as Huasipungo, by Jorge Icaza, and Broad and Alien is the World, by Ciro Alegria, reflects a state of merciless exploitation and an iniquity unparalleled in history.

Mario C. Vazquez[39b] portrays race relations in Peru, a picture which appears to be identical to that prevalent in southern United States. Dr. Vazquez falls into the North American fallacy of racial prejudice being social in Peru, implying that in the United States it is not equally social.

Apart from this slight concession to the power structure, the picture Dr. Vazquez presents is devastating:

> Based on these observations, one may submit that in Marcara as in the rest of the Andean region, there are two groups of defined social caste: the peasants called "Indios" or "Indigenas" (native inhabitants), and the mestizo-criollo. One of the groups, in spite of constituting a majority, is obliged to act like, and is considered a minority, and the other, the ruling group, keeps them in a state of marginality and subordination to him.... .....The mestizos' hostile attitude toward Indians is not just limited to verbal aggression, but rather reaches the point of discrimination; that is, they put into practice their prejudice by treating the Indians as inferior and dangerous individuals, denying them the exercies of their rights as citizens; they are forced to behave in a servile fashion when in the presence of mestizos; for example, they are placed in the back of the church during religious ceremonies; they are made to stand and to wait when they have dealings with public agencies; they are placed in the most uncomfortable seats of public transportation, although they pay the same fare as mestizos; they do not receive service in restaurants nor are they given lodging in hotels. When Indians stay at the homes of their <u>compadres</u>, their godparents, or mestizo friends, they are treated like servants (who are also Indian), they are given leftovers to eat, are made to sleep with the animals and are given old clothing. In contrast, when a mestizo arrives at the home of an Indian, he is regaled with specially-prepared meals, is offered the best room and bed. These daily occurrences can be observed not only in Marcara, but also throughout the Andean region of Ancash. .....The attitude and superiority behavior of mestizos are reinforced by legal devices and state organisms, which consider Indians as minors, who need to be protected and oriented in the direction of a specific fate.

About Guatemala, both Morris Siegel and Melvin Tumin[40] have described a closed system of categories. Tumin states in his study:

> At least as far as the present attitudes in San Luis are concerned no Indian can hope to be fully accepted in Ladino society, no matter how wealthy, well cressed, literate, well educated or professionally employed he may be ..... No Ladino for instance, no matter how humble or denigrated his position, is ever considered by the other Ladinos socially equal to or below any Indian. But conversely no Indian is ever considered by Ladinos the social equal or superior to any Ladino, no matter how many of the criteria of distinction he may possess.

Tumin compares the ladinos with the aristocracy of the Old South in the United States, longing for the bygone era when their power was indisputable.

Mexico could have been a possible exception, given the fact that the national image to some extent has been derived from a direct confrontation with a neighbor who has power to define Mexico as a mestizo country. National pride has thus been forged upon the foundations of the great civilizations which occupied their territory in pre-Colombian times, the true stature of which is witnessed by the ruins of their pyramids, temples and palaces comparable in splendor to those of Mesopotamia, Egypt, India and China.

Yet this idealized image cultivated by the intellectuals and artists of Mexico does not seem to trickle down to the actual life situation of their people. A recent article by Bejar Nazario adds to the findings of Mexican anthropologists like Julio de la Fuente and others in his own observations on "Prejuicio y

Discriminacion Racial en Mejico".* He reports about segregationist patterns imposed by ladinos upon the indians of Chiapas in which the latter were to leave the sidewalk to the former on meeting one another. In speaking to a ladino man, an indian was expected to take off his hat, and bend down his head in a submissive manner. Indians are deemed stupid by ladinos with no power of reason and those who refuse to live up to that image are called "uppity" (alzados). In some churches of Chiapas, a rope is strung to segregate the Indians from the Ladino congregation. Segregation is also practiced in cementeries. Indian girls are often raped by their Ladino employers who consider this doing them a favor since offspring of such relations are "bleached" in a social category intermediate to both parents. Bejar Nazario also mentions the "clause of appearance" in newspaper classified ads posting job opportunities which Emilio Willems has also mentioned in relation to Brazil. "Good appearance" means closeness to the European somatic norm, or to put it in Puerto Rican words, "If you are white you are alright, but if you are blond you hit the jackpot". Any degree of resemblance to the "Indian" somatic norm seems to be taken as object of derision when people comment that so and so has a "criadita" appearance. In Mexican movies, actors with stereotyped "mestizo" or indian" features usually play the villain's role and outstanding actors with such features, such as Pedro Almendariz, have almost completely disappeared to open the way to physical types mimetic of American rock and roll.

---

* Revista Mexicana de Sociologia, XXXl #2, 1969, pp. 428-39.

The discrimination pattern which segregates mulatoes from blacks in Haiti has been depicted by Dr. Remie Bastien in the following words:*

> Generally called the Black Republic because the population is 95% Negro, Haiti at least should not present a racial problem, yet it does and a lively one. Since colonial times, a minority of mulatoes has been at odds with the black majority of the population.

Haiti is in some respects, the test case of our hypothesis, since, as in the case of discrimination of Jews in Nazi Germany, it demonstrates that the "traits" upon which racial classifications are based in a society may necessarily not be duplicated in other societies whose cognitive and evaluative assumptions are different.

When we examine the literature on racial relationships in Puerto Rico, we find expressions corresponding to the general pattern set out for Latin America.

Garver and Fincher, in their book Puerto Rico: Unsolved Problem,[41] maintain that our degree of racial mixture is so extreme that it is impossible to separate persons into racial categories. To illustrate we can take the two most outstanding Puerto Rican movie actors in the United States. Garver and Fincher could not distinguish signs of different racial identity in Juano Hernandez (star of "Intruder in the Dusk") and Jose Ferrer (protagonist of "Cyrano de Bergerac").

Earl Parker Hanson,[42] in his image of Puerto Rico as a land of

---

* R. Bastien, "The Role of the Intellectual in Haitian Plural Society" in Annals of the New York Academy of Science, Vol. 83, #5, New York, 1960.

marvels, describes a mysterious kind of racial discrimination. According to him, a "drop of white blood" in Puerto Rico is sufficient for a person to be identified as a member of the white race. The invention of so-called "white blood" should be enough to immortalize Hanson. As if the myth of blood were not enough already, the author tells us that the difference in the status of a white and a negro in Puerto Rico is insignificant.[43]

The Reverend Joseph Fitzpatrick, of Fordham University, believes that there is a certain degree of racial identity consciousness in Puerto Rico, but to him, racial discrimination exists only among "small groups of the middle and upper classes". According to him, racial characteristics vary from totally Caucasian to completely Negroid, (is that not the case also in the United States?) and except for the "small middle and upper class groups", any congregation of Puerto Ricans would represent a sum of the racial mixture which is characteristic of the society.*

---

* This reminds us of the North Americanized perception of Brazilian sailors by Gilberto Freyre which Octavio Janni has pertinently unmasked:

> "Of all Brazilian problems, there is none that disturbs me as much as miscegenation. Once, after more than three years' absence from Brazil, I saw a group of Brazilian sailors, mulattoes and cafusos, disembarking from either the "Sao Paulo" or the "Minas" - I can't remember which - in the soft snow of Brooklyn. They impressed me as being caricatures of men."
>
> Brazilian social scientists have acquired North American and European categories of thought which lead into a derisive self-image and has led them astray from the Brazilian reality. The state of the social sciences leads into a naive transposition of a frame of refefence and a conceptual system which has no application to Brazilian socicty. In other words, the study of racial interbreeding reinforces an image of Brazil which reinforces a diffuse national inferiority feeling, whose function is conformity to external domination.
>
> Racas e Classes Sociais no Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, 1966, pp. 7-8

On the other hand, Sidney Mintz feels that the racial criterion of Puerto Rico's social structure is indistinguishable from the social class criterion.[44] Dr. Mintz states:

> It has been frequently said that "race" in Puerto Rico means only social class. It is plain that such affirmation is true in many classes: the color of an individual may vary according to changes he undergoes in his socio-economic status. The peculiar history of Puerto Rico hasn't allowed color to be a sign of degradation, as has so tragically happened in the United States.

In a recent article, Dr. Mintz reiterates the overstated North American myth that in Puerto Rico racial prejudice is social and not biological. According to this article, the problem of race relations in Puerto Rico has not been studied yet. Nevertheless,[46] Mintz praises Pedreira's Insularismo, a literary work of the '30s, which maintains the most blatantly racistic explanation known of Puerto Rican society, while ignoring the recent investigations of the Committee on Civil Rights, as well as other recent studies cited herein.[47]

The conclusions reached by some American researchers and of all the native social scientists dealing with this problem of race relations departs diametrically from the official doctrine that "no race prejudice exists in Puerto Rico.

Jose Colomban Rosario and Justina Carrion[48] have been severely critical of the social hypocricy in which racial prejudice is denied open discussion in Puerto Rico, saying that it has been hidden in a dark, unhealthy place, hidden from public view where the tropical sun could work its purifying effect. The Puerto Rican complicity in a fraudulent hoax, mixing social hypocricy with American racism has been also denounced by Maxine Gordon.[49]

> We maintain, however, that no Puerto Rican is unaware of his position in the Puerto Rican society, as determined by the color of his skin. Color is not the only physical characteristic which subjects him to discrimination. Many Puerto Ricans fear their fellows will see in them other racial traits associated with Negroes. Caste status for Negro and White in Puerto Rico is based upon the same factors Dollard cites for Negro and White in the United States.

In the same vein, Morris Siegel writes:[50]

> They view as ugly the physical characteristics popularly attributed to Negroes such as dark skin, thick lips, a broad nose, and frizzly hair. A well known verse is often cited in this connection:
>
> The Negro was made by God
> In order to complete a group
> But since they act so stupid
> God left his ears and his ox's nose
> And his horse-like blubber lips.

Puerto Rican racism takes on verbal form in anecdotes in which the attempt is made to degrade the character of distinguished persons, such as the senator who could never reach the position of prominence to which he aspired, due to his racial stigmatization. With the intention of tarnishing his political image, his adversaries would tell the supposedly true story of the time when the senator in question was riding in his beautiful limousine and the chauffeur had to stop at a service station. The employee who waited on them looked at the passenger in the back seat and commented under his breath, "What a good ride you picked up, Blackie". With the same contriving, they would tell that one time the senator almost had a car accident, and the chauffeur looked back and said, "Senator, you're pale!" "Quick, call the photographers!" is the supposed answer.

People also tell about the aforementioned senator who,

accompanied by a white colleague, was on a trip to Paris. As neither of them spoke French, they pointed to their testicles to indicate that they wanted eggs* for breakfast, The white senator was brought fried eggs, and the light mulatto senator, stewed prunes. It was told as a true story that one day the senator was walking back and forth in front of people who came to look for work in the Puerto Rican office in New York. Very neatly dressed, he wandered from one end of the room to the other. One irritated lady got up and stated that she was leaving, so as not to see walking in front of her "that black upstart".

When a governor of the island married the senator's daughter, people would comment with insidious humor that the governor had "un negro por venir" (a play on words, which can mean "a black child to come" or "a black future"; porvenir meaning future, por venir, to come. The electoral campaign of 1968 was very tainted with racism when a candidate to the governorship was disqualified on the basis of his supposed negro condition, which would be a handicap in dealing on equal terms with racistic congressmen in the United States.

It is difficult to believe that we Puerto Ricans still do not realize that North Americans use the words "white" and "Puerto Rican" as mutually exclusive terms. Even harder to believe is that we have begun to accept the North American criterion of race, judged by the fact that both the wife of the ex-governor as well

---

* In Spanish, "huevos", eggs, is used to refer to testicles.

as the candidate to the governorship are people with definitely caucasoid physical traits meeting the white somatic norm of our culture. It is a fact that in Puerto Rico one takes as insolent "uppityness" that a person of a "non-white" social identity dresses elegantly. This is mockingly indicated by the racist epithet "fly in a glass of milk". If a "non-white" demands his human rights, he is labeled an "upstart grifo" (grifo parejero *).

The evidence is indisputable. I fail to understand where Sidney Mintz[51] gets the idea that in Puerto Rico one's race varies with his position in the class hierarchy. Perhaps Mintz assumes, from the racist North American perspective, that Puerto Ricans, by not taking into account the North American criterion of hypodescent, accept the non-white category implied by the non-use of this criterion in North American culture. This is nothing more than an ethnocentric projection of North American racism, for it is not the perception Puerto Ricans have of themselves, although the power of Americans to define us has begun to show its incidious effects.

I am applauding neither racism Puerto Rican nor Americano style. I am attempting to unveil them. Let's look at examples. The pejorative expressions saturated with scorn for the condition of "non-white" persons forms a long chapter in the repertoire of our racist folklore. Thus, we have expressions which debase the negro's human dignity, such as "if he doesn't put his foot in it when he walks in, he does it when he walks out": "A negro is as black as the 28th is red";** "the negro always spills the soup"

---

*Cf: Antonio S. Pedreira, Insularismo, BAP (San Juan, 1942).

**The 28th of February is a red-letter day on the calendar.

(i.e., is clumsy); "black is evil", "blacker than night"; "black as the caldron's asshole". The repertoire of popular verses is equally extensive. We have mentioned the verse cited by Morris Siegel. There are others, such as:

I started to wash a negro
To see what color he took on,
And as I washed him
He got blacker.

A negro black as a caldron
Stole a chicken*
And as no one saw him
He carried it off in his shirt.
This negro was no good
Since he stole the hen;
While passing by a valley,
He got himself in trouble,
His button popped off
And the chicken stuck out.

When a negro is eating,
In the company of a white,
Either the white owes him something
Or it's the negro's food.

And who in Puerto Rico hasn't heard the myth of the greased black who runs around naked, slippery, and invisible on dark nights looking for white women with the intention of raping them? This is the same projection made by North Americans in southern United States, when they displace and project their own phallic impulses and attribute them to an oppressed populace, thus in part justifying the oppression.

Even today in popular music "they kill the fatlipped black", and then justify it "because he has such fat lips". ** Sidney Mintz[52] will say that the word "negrito" is used as a "term of affection".

---

* "Polla means "hen" and "penis".

** "Matan al Negro Bembon" is a guaracha played by Cortijo y su Combo, an all negro popular musical band.

The word "puta" (whore) is also used affectionately with reference to attractive girls ("ninas monas"). This doesn't mean that "puta" is not an insulting term, even more so than "mona" (monkey).

In a study we carried out in 1959, by interviews with a representative group of the Puerto Rican population, we found substantial evidence that racial prejudice constitutes a serious problem in Puerto Rico.[53] According to the results of our study, the structure of social positions which are established on the basis of racial criteria contains three fundamental categories, constituted by the following portions of the population:

Table VI
Distribution of Racial Positions in Puerto Rico

White 73.1%
Intermediate 19.2%
Negro..... 7.5%

If racial discrimination didn't exist in Puerto Rico, we could deduce that Puerto Ricans neither recognize nor claim for themselves identity or social ranking on the basis of racial considerations. However, we found in our study that no persons of the "non-white" categories classified himself as upper class, while the proportion of persons of color who identify themselves as lower class surpassed statistical projections.

Table VII
Relation Between Social Position and Racial Identity in Puerto Rican Social Structure

Class	Negro %	Intermed. %	White %	Total number of cases *
upper			100	10
middle	6	15.7	78.3	213
lower	9.2	22	68.7	314
				537

* 96 persons did not know, or refused to answer questions used as indices of social position.

One can well imagine the degree to which racial considerations determine one's identity in Puerto Rico, for we found that 63.6% of the "non-white" population stated that, for fear of social rejection, they would refrain from attending a dance where most couples would be white.

Table VIII
Answers by "non-whites" to the question: If you went to a dance where most couples were white, how would you feel?

Uncomfortable, out of place	63.6%
All right	23.6
Indifferent	10.0
No answer	2.7

Total number of cases - - - - - - 110

The answer to this question is a definite indication that the "non-white" population of Puerto Rico perceives the existence of social barriers which prevent him from acting without inhibitions among those not of his own racial group.

Of the total "non-white" population represented in our study, 49.5% believe that they would not be well received in the aforementioned social situation, and 38% do not feel they would be welcome newcomers in a white neighborhood.

Table IX
Answers Indicative of Consciousness of Segregation Among Population of Color.... How Would People Receive You?

	At a dance of whites	In a white neighborhood
Not well received ...	49.5%	38.0%
Well received	24.7	41.9
No answer	19.2	3.8
Unsure	6.4	16.1

Total number of cases - - - - - - 109

This anticipated rejection seems exaggerated if we consider the fact that 70.3% out of the group of white informants expressed the feeling of having no objection to "non-white" families in their neighborhood. The basis of the suspicion held by "non-white" informants resides in the fact that only 36.3% of the white informants think that other residents would welcome in unprejudiced fashion a "colored" family in their neighborhood.

Table X
Indication of racial segregation of non-white population. "Would you be in favor or against a "non-white" family's moving into this neighborhood?"

	Themselves	The Neighbors
In favor	70.3%	36.3%
Against	6.0	14.1
Indifferent	23.5	13.0
No answer	0	15.5

Total number of cases - - - - 567

In a study on urbanism, directed by Dr. Caplow of the Center of Social Research, something was revealed which shows that practices of residential segregation do exist in the metropolitan area. It was found that the distribution by some of the "non-white" residents could not be coincidental.

Table Xl
Distribution of residents by race in Selected sectors of the Metropolitan Area

Class	Zone	%whites	% non-whites
Upper middle	Morro	94	6
Upper	Las Marias	96	4
Lower	Monacillo urbano	40	60

Another fact revealed by the Committee on Civil Rights is that university fraternities, clubs, private associations and casinos openly discriminate against "non-white" candidates. Our negro informants expressed their opinion with regard to the possibilities of being accepted as a member of a white association, and 35% felt that their candidacy would be rejected. This feeling seems exaggerated when we compare it with the answers of 86.5% of the white informants, who stated that they would vote in favor of a colored candidate. Nevertheless, it is evident that this is not an exaggeration, because only 53.4% of the white informants feel that other members of this society would vote in favor of a "non-white" candidate.

Table XII
Attitudes Towards Racial Segregation

How they would vote	They themselves %	How they assess the vote of others %
In favor	86.5	53.4%
Against	6.2	13.6
No answer	7.1	13.2
Don't know	0	19.2

Total number of cases - - - - - 304

We could interpret as simply ignorance the discrepancy between what the persons responding said they would do, and what they suppose that others would do. But it could be interpreted too as a manifestation of social hypocrisy. When stating one's own attitude, one assumes a veil of liberalism that is in harmony with principles of the Christian ethic and the prevailing public morals. When one provides information on others, he does not feel bound by these principles.

As concerns marriages among persons of different racial categories, 14.1% of the group stated that the majority of their town's residents would censure such a marriage; 36.3% felt that people's reaction would be favorable, while 13% declared that people would be indifferent; 26.3% refused to answer the question.

Out of the sample taken from the "non-white" population, 21.1% stated opposition to the marriage of their daughter to a white person, for fear that she would be treated badly or abandonned; 55.4% of the white informants answered that they would oppose marriage of their daughter to a "non-white" citing reasons which reflect the significance they give social credentials of the social category of color. They say that "it would harm their race", that it would "threaten their social contacts", and that their grandchildren would suffer the disadvantages of an inferior social position.

Table XIII
If your Daughter were in Love with and
Determined to Marry a "non-white" man,

	How would you feel?	How would you act?
	%	%
In favor	24.2	26.2
Against	55.4	33.7
Indifferent	16.2	38.3
Doesn't know	3.6	1.3

Total number of cases - - - - 540

There is no question that in Puerto Rico's social structure those positions assigned to persons of color have a detrimental effect on the enjoyment of freedom and that dignity which is the right of every human being, according to the fundamental principals of the Constitution of Puerto Rico, "Free Associated

State".*

It is self-evident that racial discrimination functions as a barrier to educational and vocational opportunities for those persons discriminated against. It is well known that the attributing of social inferiority tends to operate as a "self-fulfilling prophecy". It has been demonstrated in the United States that the supposed intellectual inferiority that is attributed to the non-white population affects the appropriation of public funds to this group for education and job opportunities. Limiting those funds and school facilities for the non-white population produces a situation which appears to be "evidence" of the false supposition. Otto Klineberg's study[54] has proven that, given equal opportunities, the American black population reaches intellectual levels on a par with the white population.

The Constitution of Puerto Rico establishes the principle of equality of educational opportunities for all Puerto Ricans. Studies of the Committee on Civil Rights show, however, that racially discriminatory practices exist in private schools, a phenomenon which was not observed in the public schools. The proportion of persons of negro descent which enjoys the opportunity of a university education is far too low in comparison with other racial groups. This difference could not be due merely to coincidence, although it does not in itself constitute evidence of racial discrimination. The racial factor could be affected by economic limitations which would constitute the determining factor responsible for the fact that

---

* "La dignidad del ser humano es inviolable, no podra establecerse discrimen alguno por motivo de raza, sexo, nacimiento, origen, o condicion social, ni ideas politicas o religiosas. (Sec. 11, Carta Derechos).

only 2% of the negro population (next to 4.8% of those of intermediate racial position, and 8.4% of the white population) has had access to university studies.

Table XlV
Educational Level of Different Socio-racial Groups

Education	White %	Intermediate %	Negro %
None	11.1	13.0	8
1 - 4	28.3	31.7	46
5 - 7	16.7	12.0	12
8 - 12	27.3	31.0	28
University	8.4	4.8	2
Total # of cases	483	123	50

Immediately noticeable is the fact that the proportion of negros is less than other groups in such a way as to reflect the complete lack of schooling. The information suggests the influence of residential localization: this sector of the population resides predominantly in urban zones.

With regard to job opportunities, the Committee of Civil Liberties reports that there is an almost complete absence of "non-whites" in bank employment as well as in many clothing stores in the metropolitan area. The results of our study indicate an inequitable distribution of job opportunities.

Table XV
Racial Category and Occupation

Occupation	White %	Intermediate %	Negro %
Housewife	43.1	41.8	24
Worker			
Non-skilled	15.1	16.3	32
Skilled	8.5	14.0	28
"White collar"	12.0	13.0	6
Professional	7.0	7.3	0
Retired	3.3	1.6	4
Landowner or Entrepreneur	7.4	1.6	4
Total # of cases- - - - -	478	118	50

The proportion of negro wives working outside the home was two times greater than in the other racial groups. The same disproportion is evident in the number of negros who are engaged in unskilled manual labor, as well as those occupations which enjoy high prestige and are well paid.

Puerto Rican racism, if not exposed and confronted, will continue extending its noxious effect. As Colomban Rosario and Justina Carrion noted 30 years ago, it becomes absurd for one to deny it, by "blocking out the sky with a hand".

Social hypocrisy has reached the point of drowning in a conspiracy of silence the possibilities for an open, healthy, discussion of the problem of racism in Puerto Rico, attempting at the same time to cast out the evil spirits, with exorcising techniques of public relations. According to Maxine Gordon, the underlying dogma inhibiting discussion[55] is the categorical imperative, "There are no racial problems here". This dogma has come to be the doctrine proclaimed in all directions by those who want to present Puerto Rico as a model of democratic society. There is nothing more commendable than such a desire, and nothing more destructive to the attainment of it than to adopt an infantile attitude that assumes that all that is needed to reach a goal is "good intentions to wish for it", and the only thing needed to destroy unwanted evils is to imitate the ostrich.

Far from having been solved, the Puerto Rican racial problem now begins to acquire new dimensions, twists and complications which require clarification before attempting the necessary diagnosis which will allow effective treatment. One of the

unanticipated consequences is what Renzo Sereno perceived and diagnosed as "cryptomelanism".[56] According to Sereno, cryptomelanism is a vague, unclear feeling of insecurity which afflicts many Puerto Ricans with respect to their racial identity. The principal characteristic is a constant and strange fear in the face of the possibility that someone will doubt the "purity of their blood", that is, doubt their white social condition, understood in North American terms. Renzo Sereno has unwittingly told us that Puerto Ricans have heedlessly begun to import racism based on the North American racial criterion of "blood" or hypodescent with its corollary of fully discredited pure races of Adolf Hitler.

The Puerto Ricans affected by the pathological contamination described by Sereno see themselves and others in the light of the North American concept of race, without questioning the validity or applicability of this concept to a society organized by different cultural assumptions. The concept of "pure" race is invalid, because pure races do not exist, neither in Puerto Rico, nor in the United States, nor in Europe, nor in Africa, nor any place in the world.

If the idea of pure race applied to the European population seems ridiculous, when it is applied to New World populations it becomes absurd and tragic, because it serves as a premise for the self-hate implied in cryptomelanism. The notion of pure race is imported surreptitiously in all studies of racial relations which take as a starting point the idea that the Puerto Rican population is racially mixed, and conclude that the population conceives of

itself as being of negro social identity, and thus discrimination and racial prejudice are just not possible, "just a way of talking", not really so among Puerto Ricans.

Cultural difference amounts to difference in reality, encoded in language, social structure and world view. The reality selectively encoded and perceived in one culture may not be reality at all in another culture. The "objects" upon which social identities are recognized and acted out in the social structure may and usually do differ quite significantly from one culture to another. Latin American social structure differs from North American in the criteria upon which "racial" identities is predicated and consequently the structure of interpersonal relations that stem thereon.

The hypodescent criterion which determines racial identity in the United States contrasts significantly with the Latin American criterion of somatic norms. Which of these two cultural criteria comes closest to the anthropological and scientific criterion of race? Both commit the inhuman error of giving assent to intellectual, moral, or social superiority to some racial categories and denying them to others. Anthropological data gives ample support to the concept of the basic unity of mankind, formulated by Bastian at the end of the last century.[57] Otto Klineberg has shown by the most rigorous means of scientific investigation that the so-called intellectual "inferiority" of the Negro population of the United States is far from being a phenomenon of racial or

innate character, being rather the result of the oppression under which this people is evolving, especially in the southern part of the country.

As concerns the social categories established on the base of "racial" criteria, Latin American societies are closer to the genetic criterion, by taking somatic norms as criteria instead of hypodescent.

There is a real disparity between what is said in Puerto Rico about the race issue and what people do. The myth of racial democracy in Puerto Rico serves as a screen for those who wish to perpetuate colonial demination of Puerto Ricans, basing this on a racist justification which places us on a level of social inferiority with respect to the "white" North American who sees us in the light of the concept of "white man's burden".

We must become conscious of both North American-style racism, as well as its Puerto Rican counterpart:

1) Racism, Puerto Rican style, derives from a history of slavery in which it served a function of internal colonialism which in ameliorated form still remains in our country.

2) The hypocritical myth of racial democracy contains an acceptance of North American racism, which functions to legitimize external colonialism, by accepting a supposed "inferiority" of Puerto Ricans contrived as white man's burden before the white North American.

3) Both forms of racism emerge from cultural assumptions which attempt to legitimate domination and exploitation.

4) Culture is learned - - that which is learned can be unlearned, should power structures so desire.

We must destroy the myth of racial democracy so that the absurdity of our racial prejudice may be brought to the surface, and we may face it in daylight, with the hope that in the future, instead of myth there will come forth a social structure in which "race" elicits no meaning whatsoever, and true democracy sets a structure of human relations without domination, exploitation and colonization.

If in fact the racial prejudice virus did not exist in Puerto Rico and Puerto Ricans were to accept a Negro identity with no cryptomelanic horror or confusion, then instead of seeing this as problematic, we would welcome it as evidence that man can learn to ignore ancient prejudices. But it serves no purpose to ignore facts which indicate that racial prejudice is increasing, as a result of the cryptomelanic insecurity produced in the Puerto Rican by seeing himself through the looking glass of an outside power.

According to Eric Williams' observations,[58] racial prejudice in Puerto Rico is presently becoming more intense, precisely as a defensive reaction in the face of the North American group in question. According to Dr. Williams, this intensification in the last few years is due to the importation of North American capital. Thomas Mathews in an aforementioned article has brought forth a multiplicity of cases of racial segregation in hotels which includes Dr. Eric Williams himself.[59] Sereno points out in his article the reticence with which Puerto Ricans introduce their friends to North Americans.

The Committee on Civil Rights[60] informs us of the almost total absence of colored personnel in agencies and businesses that deal with North American clients.

A study by the author, carried out in New York,[61] reveals that, facing a situation that confers on the Puerto Rican a black social identity, some white Puerto Ricans begin to deny their national identity in order to safeguard their "racial" identity. Others accept the identity given to them, reaffirming their adherence to a movement of cultural nationalism which has tendencies similar to Mexican "indigenismo". Faced with an analogous situation, many Mexicans proudly claim a ficticious or real link to an Indian race.* The influence of North American racism in Puerto Rican culture has been most accurately adumbrated by fiction writers. Pedro Juan Soto, in Usmail, makes the illegitimate son of a black Puerto Rican woman and a white American handout program director identify himself as Black. In a play already mentioned, by Francisco Arrivi, the white granddaughter of a black Puerto Rican woman is forced by her American fiance to choose between passing and "burying" her past or maintaining her identity on Puerto Rican cultural grounds. Luis Pales Matos' poetry, although racistic in its primitivistic ascription to black people, contains a grain of negritude, the counterpart of indigenismo.

On the other hand, the confrontation of the Puerto Rican with

---

* The Indian peoples of the New World belong to the mongoloid racial group.

the image of Negro conferred on him by the North American looking glass, produces one of the most anomolous phenomena of Puerto Rican society: the annexationist negro. It is a fact that the first annexation party was founded and directed by a person classified as negro in the structure of racial categories in Puerto Rico. A significant portion of the electorate which supports annexation parties are in the same category. Laying aside the often-heard racist explanation of this phenomenon, we search and find in the theory of reference groups[62] the most satisfactory explanation of this social anomaly. The hypothesis which in our opinion best explains this situation is quite simple: the Puerto Rican confrontation with a negro racial identity is less antagonistic to negros than to other groups. At the same time, the confrontation levels - - that is eliminates - - racial differences and this, seen from the perspective of the reference group, is experienced as a liberating* redemption from the racist yoke which has traditionally been imposed on Puerto Rican negros.

An illustrative situation has been described by Robert Manners[63] with regard to Puerto Rican soldiers recruited to serve in the Armed Forces during World War II:

---

* Explaining this idea to our students has been made easier by the following analogy: A Puerto Rican manager pays low wages to some employees and high wages to others. The new manager arrives and assumes that they are equal, and decides to pay the same low salary to all of them. Those employees receiving low wages previously would feel the new order as liberation. The wages in this analogy stand for social status.

> They were given a different "status", that of "Puerto Ricans". The whites resisted this overall classification which placed them in the position of Puerto Rican negros, since they were aware of the segregation practiced against North American Negroes. It was evident that they were treated as inferiors and that they had been assigned the same position (socio-racial) as black Puerto Ricans, from whom they were not differentiated. This experience caused resentment, which today is directed against the government that was responsible for this humiliation.

The information reported by Manners raises more questions than it answers. It would be logical to ask if that situation affected relations between white Puerto Rican soldiers and negro soldiers. Since the negros are the weakest "link" in the chain, one may conjecture that it would be there and not out of resentment toward Americans that aggression would be vented.

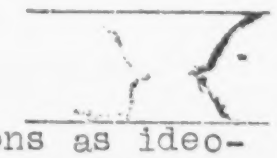
64

Langston Hughes has described with a great sense of humor the defensive reaction of Puerto Ricans in the face of a North American looking glass which places them and all Puerto Ricans in the position of Negroes.

> I said: Puerto Rican? Are you one?
> He said: Si are you one too?
> I said: I am not. I am just plain old American.
> I said: You look just like me, don't you.
> Who's the darkest, me or you?
> He said: You darkest.
> I said: I admit I have an edge on almost anybody.
> But you are colored too, daddy-o, don't
> forget, Puerto Rican or not.
> He said: In my country, no.
> In my country yes, I said, here in the U. S. A.,
> you, me, all colored folks - - are
> colored.
> He said: No entiendo. Don't understand.

There are a multiplicity of reverberations which work against solidarious living in Puerto Rico, and this is a reflection of a fusion of incompatible cultural assumptions. Two forms

of racial prejudice, which are mutually exclusive, in the logical sense tend to produce a splitting of personality which at times functions with a perceptive set ("gestalt") which does not ever relate to the second receptive set. It's as if one were to look at a double image, figure and ground - - one minute it looks like two faces, and the next like a vessel - - when one is dominant the other recedes and one can never integrate them.



The solution is in understanding both perceptions as ideologies which attempt to justify existing relationships of domination and exploitation. The origin of our racism was a function of exploitative relationships, under a slave economy, and then it was used to justify the alienation of the product of labor from large sectors of a labor force who served as beasts of burden in order to maintain the leisure and wealth of our criollo aristocracy and bourgeoisie.

Then supplanting the Spanish colonial regime, the North American culture is difused propelled by power reinforcement mechanisms* and attempts to subjugate the Puerto Rican nation on the basis of a race concept which places us in a position of "white man's burden".

Today in Puerto Rico two models of social interaction are maintained which stem from social scotomization of incompatible racial criteria. A series of quasi-hysterical psychological mechanisms have been elaborated which prevent conscious perception of the imbalance produced by simultaneous application of mutually

---

* Cf: "El Poder como Agente Acondicionante de la Personalidad" in Anuario Indigenista, Mexico 1969.

incompatible social criteria. Cognition consistent with a North American culture perceives the Puerto Rican as a human being who is unaware of racism and accepts himself with a non-white identity. Cognition on the basis of the traditional Puerto Rican cultural definition carries out an entirely different image. Those who have power to reward have power to socialize and Puerto Ricans are being socialized into a cultural double bind.. This is psychologically an explosive area and on every public occasion in which we have brought it up, we have noted the audience's rise in emotional level which is dissipated when someone spells out the power supported American categorical imperative: "There is no racial prejudice here because those who don't have this kind of black blood have that kind, (el que no tiene dinga tiene mandinga).*

When this statement is meant to apply to Puerto Ricans alone and is made in the first person singular, then we will have gone all the way from Puerto Rican to American racism - - - our plight in acculturation.

---

* Ironically mandinga means both an African ancestry and the devil.

Addenda

To such a point has the rhetoric of racial democracy blinded our historians that a statement such as the following is presented in support of the myth in question.*

> The slave represented an instrument of costly production from which the owner expected to obtain the greatest possible benefits. Since there was a scarcity of Africans, the owner necessarily had to be much concerned with the state of health and the physical condition of his serf .... Occurences of harsh treatment were rather exceptional in Puerto Rico. News of the violent death of a slave due to the application of excessive punishment, caused scandal and severe criticism was made of the master or foreman responsable for such an atrocity.

In the same monograph on Black slavery in Puerto Rico, Diaz Soler quotes the Slave Code implanted in 1826 by governor Miguel de la Torre which gave power to slave owners and military personnel to execute without the benefit of trial or defense any slave suspected of conspiracy.

In 1848, governor Juan Prim proclaimed the following Bando Contra la Raza Africana:

> Article #1: The crimes of any kind which any individual of the African, resident on the island will commit from the publication of this edict; be he free or slave, will be judged and sentenced militarily by the Council of War which the Lietenant Governor will name for cases that occur, with the absolute prohibition of any other tribunal.
>
> Article #2: Any individual of the African race, be he free or slave, who takes up arms against the whites, however justified the aggression;

---

* Luis M. Diaz Soler, La Esclavitud Negra en Puerto Rico, U. P. R., 1957.

if a slave, will be summarily shot; and if free, will have his right hand cut off by the henchman, but if he results wounded, he will be summarily shot.

Article #3: If individuals of the African race, be they free or slave, insult with words, maltreat or menace with a stick, rock or in any way whatsoever that demonstrates their deliberate intent offend white people in their person, the aggressor will be condemned to five years in prison if he be slave, and if free to the punishment that the circumstances of the crime dictate, after his defense.

Article #4: Slave owners are authorized by virtue of this edict to correct and punish slaves that commit misdemeanors without the intervention of military or civil functionaries because only my authority will be deemed necessary to judge the behavior of slave owners in respect to slaves.

Article #5: If, although it is not likely, any slave rebels against his master, the latter is authorized to kill him in the act so that this quick and formidable punishment may serve to prevent others from following the example.

Article #6: It corresponds to the military commanders of the eight Departamentos of this island to initiate the first investigations of crimes committed by individuals of African race against public security, persons and property: seeing that the procedure be of a summary nature, brief and never to extend beyond the unchangeable limit of 24 hours. Charges will be sent by immediate mail to me in order to dictate the sentence corresponding to the penalties established in this edict.

Notes

1. Thomas, Piri, through one of the characters in his Down Those Mean Streets, gives the definition of hypodescent that predominates in the U. S. social structure: 'A black man is so important that a drop of Negro blood can make a black man out of a pink asshole blue-eyed white man'. (op. cit., p. 122).

2. Cayton, Horace. Black Metropolis. Harcourt Brace & Co. (New York, 1945), p. 159.

3. Warner, Lloyd. "Introduction", in Davis, Allison, Gardner and Gardner, Deep South (Chicago, 1941).

4. Harris, Marvin. Patterns of Race in the Americas. (New York, 1969), p. 56.

5. Hutchinson, Harry W. "Race Relations in a Rural Community of the Reconcavo", in Race and Class in Rural Brazil, ed. Charles Wagley.

6. Stokes, William S. Latin American Politics. Thomas Crowell (New York, 1964), p. 5.

7. Quoted from Jose Pablo Morales, "El Jibaro", Aguinaldo Puertorriqueno" in Babin, Maria Teresa, Panorama de la Cultura Puertorriquena, New York, Las Americas Publishing Corp. 1958.

8. Quoted by Anselme Remy, "Race Relations in the Caribbean", New York University, Department of Anthropology, M. A. thesis, 1966.

9. Saltz, Beate, "Indianismo", Social Research, vol. 11, November 1944, pp. 441-469.

10. See Miriam Reimann. "How Children Become Prejudiced" in M. L. Barrow, American Minorities. Knopf (New York, 1962), pp. 94-104.

11. The criterion of hypodescent (i.e. if an ancestor was of the faith) was used as a determinant of Jewish "racial" identity.

12. Berry, Brewton. Ethnic Relations. Boston, Houghton and Mifflin Co. 1967.

13. Blankstein, George. "Latin America" in The Politics of Developing Areas, ed. Almond and Colesman, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1960, p. 467.